

Recreation Advisory Board

September 8, 2014

Board Members Present: Hutch Kerns - Chair, Josh O'Conner - Vice-Chair, Bob Pierce, Barry Mundt, Todd Dunnuck, Pat Dennehy, Kim Reed, Ashley Arrington

City Council Member: Chris Pelly

Staff Present: Roderick Simmons- Director, Debbie Ivester- Assistant Director, Mark Halstead-Program Supervisor, Al Kopf- Superintendent of Planning & Development, Sandra Travis- Program Supervisor, Christy Bass-Business Services Supervisor

Guests Present: Forrest Merithew

Hutch called the meeting to order at 12:33 p.m.

1. Approval of July Minutes

Josh motioned to approve the July minutes. Barry seconded and the motion passed with all in favour.

2. RAB 2014 Goals Report

Focus Area: Communications

Barry reported he has not met with Council Liaison Chris Pelly yet, but has plans for an upcoming meeting. Councilman Pelly is RAB's City Council Liaison and emphasized the importance for all RAB members to establish relationships with City Council members and attend City Council meetings. Councilman Pelly added as issues within the purview of the RAB, it is appropriate for RAB members to reach out to individual City Council members.

Hutch noted City Council will consider the Riverside Drive Re-Development Plan at its meeting on September 9, and reminded RAB that staff member Stephanie Monson-Dahl will be invited to an upcoming RAB meeting to give an update on the plan implementation. Barry stated he will attend the City Council meeting on September 9.

Hutch also noted since the Cultural and Recreation Authority has dissolved, to change the action step in this area to represent RAB with the Buncombe County Parks and Recreation.

Focus Area: Community Outreach & Public Engagement

Ashley reported the public meetings at Aston Park Tennis Center had good citizen turnout, and the focus group will convene later this week. Debbie commented on the recent public meetings being a helpful format to accomplish the goals of the RAB. This action fulfills the action step for RAB to participate in public forums on parks and recreation projects.

Focus Area: Partnerships

Ashley reported the 'Our Parks Day' hosted by the Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation, will be October 4, 10 am to 1 pm at Haw Creek Park to spread mulch on the trail. She encouraged RAB members to sign up. Debbie will forward information to RAB members on how to register. This action fulfills the action step under Focus Area Partnerships for RAB to join in a volunteer community service work day with a community partner.

Todd reported there is no action to date on the partnership expo, and expects something for spring 2015 which he and Josh will consult with staff. Debbie added that many of the existing partnerships are in writing and include an exchange of goods and services.

Focus Area: Finance & Budget

Debbie reported staff recently met to discuss CIP and deferred maintenance projects in preparation for sharing with Hutch and Josh, and the 2015 list of deferred maintenance projects should be ready by December.

Ashley asked if more information can be posted to the website, especially as it relates to recent maintenance issues at Splashville. Sandra responded there is a link through the City's website that links to the Splashville webpage. Roderick added staff is looking into an automated alert that can go to cell phones alerting of closures. This may work well for people who do not have computer access but do have a cell phone with text capabilities.

3. RAB Vacant Positions and Recruitment

Hutch stated there is a current vacancy on the RAB and will go to city clerk Maggie Burleson for posting. He asked for all RAB members to think about anyone they may know who may be a good candidate for the Board. Debbie will forward to RAB the posting dates and how to apply. Debbie asked if RAB members would like to review the applications and make a recommendation to the City Council Board and Commissions Committee, or if they are comfortable with the applicant list moving forward. Hutch stated the action in the past was for RAB to recruit applicants but not make recommendation to council. Barry asked the applicant list be sent to all RAB members. Josh added if there are any specific recommendations that RAB members can do this one on one with City Council members.

4. Director's Report

Director Roderick Simmons reported on the following.

Summer Programs: Summer programs have finished up, there was good success with camps and staff did a great job.

Aston Park Tennis Center: The Finance Committee is studying Tennis Center operations including the fee structure, and has asked for public feedback on the proposed 3- and 4-year fee increase proposal prepared by the Finance Department, and on center operations and maintenance. The Tennis Center Focus Group is doing this and will report its findings to the Finance Committee.

Friends of the Nature Center: Friends of the Nature Center submitted a public-private partnership proposal. Staff, Finance Committee and the City Manager's office are reviewing it. Once complete expect a presentation to come before RAB. More information will be available at the RAB meeting in October.

Bill of Rights (Charters of Freedom) Monument Proposal: The Buncombe County Commissions heard a proposal from a private donor to place a replica of this monument in Pack Square Park. Commissioners approved to move the proposal to City Council for its consideration. The proposal will be heard by the Downtown Commission and RAB at its meetings in October. The park master plan will be discussed at the same time.

CIP and Deferred Maintenance: Staff is preparing the CIP and deferred maintenance plan for the next 8 quarters (2 years) and will come before RAB at its meeting in December.

Fall Youth Activity Guide: The new guide of youth activities is out, and includes many of the on-going and new programs and classes. Sandra added since the department re-organized the Marketing Team has the ability to explore new things such as the WNC Parent Expo, establish relationships with various media outlets, improve department communications on Face Book, and are currently working on a searchable website for comprehensive program listings. Staff conducted a gap analysis and determine there are not many reasonably priced toddler programs, which led to the creation of the new eight-week program at Stephens-Lee. Todd asked if children need to be registered, or if it is a drop-in program. Sandra stated that it is both.

5. Other Business

Bob shared the Friends of the Nature Center are moving forward with its public-private partnership proposal and it is being reviewed by staff, and the Friends of the Nature Center would like to give a presentation to RAB if that helps to keep this opportunity moving forward.

6. Adjournment

Hutch called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob motioned to adjourn. Barry seconded and the motion passed with all in favour.

Meeting adjourned at 1:12 p.m.